

Hu Jia and Zeng Jinyan: Government tries to silence human rights activists in China

“China said it would protect human rights, but this verdict goes completely against that.” Zeng Jinyan

THE IMMEDIATE SITUATION

- Hu Jia is one of China’s best-known environmental, HIV/AIDS and human rights activists.
- Hu and his wife, Zeng Jinyan, are respected around the world for their reports on human rights abuses in China.
- Hu has been repeatedly detained and held under house arrest.
- Following an unfair trial last April, Hu was imprisoned for three and a half years for “inciting subversion of state power.” He has been denied the medication he needs to combat hepatitis B.
- Zeng and the couple’s two-year-old daughter are now under house arrest, their telephone and internet connections cut.
- This is part of a widespread pattern of harassing and imprisoning human rights activists by the Chinese government.

WHAT WE WANT

- The immediate freedom of Hu Jia.
- The immediate end to the harassment of Zeng Jinyan and the couple’s daughter.

THE BROADER CONTEXT

Those who independently speak up for human rights in China face government harassment, grossly unfair trials, ill-treatment or torture, and often long prison sentences.

The Chinese government uses broadly-defined categories of crime – such as “separation,” “subversion,” “disturbing public order” and “stealing state secrets” – to punish people engaged in legitimate and peaceful activities.

- Following the displacement of some 6,000 families during Olympics preparations, housing



rights activist Ye Guozhu was sentenced to four years in prison, where he has been tortured.

- More than 2,000 petitioners and activists were reportedly detained during the 2007 National People’s Congress.
- Blind activist and lawyer Chen Guangcheng was sentenced to over four years in prison when he assisted villagers in a lawsuit against authorities who carried out a campaign of forced sterilizations and abortions.
- Lawyer Gao Zhisheng has been convicted of “inciting subversion” – and had his activities severely restricted – because of his peaceful efforts to draw attention to the plight of several other activists who were targets of abuse by the authorities.
- In the months before the Olympics Games in Beijing, many peaceful human rights activists and petitioners were harassed, imprisoned or removed by force from the city.

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UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

- Article 5: No torture any time.
- Article 7: Fair treatment under international law.
- Article 9: No arrest without cause under international law.
- Article 10: Right to fair trial.
- Article 19: Right to express opinions.
- Article 20: Freedom to associate with others.

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